

Backyard mosquito spraying booms, but may be too deadly



A mosquito trap, placed by the Washtenaw County health department sits Thursday, July 14, 2022, in Ann Arbor Township, Mich.

Associated Press

An 11-year-old with a big dream of playing professional soccer



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Minister of Economic Affairs announces national program for financial education



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ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE				WATER'S EDGE RESTAURANT & BAR	
MONDAY Angela Flores Violinist 6:30pm-8:30pm	TUESDAY Jean Paul Saxophonist 6:30pm-8:30pm	WEDNESDAY Eddie Kroon Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm	THURSDAY Marrybell Maduro Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm	Located at Costa Linda Beach Resort Tel +297 5838000 Ext 8106 All premium brands Elegant dining, spectacular ocean views enjoyed al fresco or in air conditioned comfort.	
FRIDAY Ricky Thomas Guitarist 7:00pm-9:00pm	SATURDAY Angela Flores Violinist 6:30pm-8:30pm	KARAOKE Happy Hour 9:00pm-11:00pm	SUNDAY Marrybell Maduro Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm		
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Backyard mosquito spraying booms, but may be too deadly

By JOHN FLESHER

AP Environmental Writer

CASCADE TOWNSHIP, Mich.

(AP) — It's an increasingly familiar sight in U.S. cities and suburbs: A van pulls up to the curb. Workers wearing gloves, masks and other protective gear strap on backpack-type mechanisms with plastic hoses, similar to leaf blowers.

Revving up the motors, they drench trees, bushes and even house walls with pesticides targeting an age-old menace: mosquitoes.

The winged, spindly-legged bloodsuckers have long been the bane of backyard barbecues and, in tropical nations, carriers of serious disease. Now, with climate change widening the insect's range and lengthening its prime season, more Americans are resorting to the booming industry of professional yard spraying.

"If you like to be outside, it certainly makes it more pleasant not to be swatting mosquitos and worrying about all the issues," said Marty Marino, a recent customer in Michigan's Cascade Township, a bedroom community near Grand Rapids.

But the chemical bombardment is beginning to worry scientists who fear over-use of pesticides is harming pollinators and worsening a growing threat to birds that eat insects.

"The materials these companies spray kill all bugs," said Lynn Goldman, an environmental health professor at George Washington University and former assistant administrator for



Mosquito Joe lead technician Damien Ysasi sprays a mixture of essential oil insecticides in a yard in Cascade Township near Grand Rapids, Mich., on July 20, 2022.

Associated Press

toxic substances at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"That includes bees, butterflies and all kinds of beneficial bugs that maybe people don't love but should," Goldman said. "It's not good to have this kind of indiscriminate killing, messing up the whole ecosystem."

More than 40% of insect species worldwide are threatened with extinction, including some pollinator bees and butterflies, according to the journal Biological Conservation.

Spraying companies, which have been multiplying with the surging demand, say they try to minimize pollinator losses but acknowledge there's collateral damage. Mosquito Joe, which treated Marino's yard and those of several neighbors on a humid July morning, avoids spraying on windy days when poisons would blow onto flowering plants that attract bees, said Lou Schager, president of the company based in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

"We need our pollinators," said David Price, the company's director of technical services. "They're incredibly important. But at the same time, we need to eliminate mosquitoes that (carry) diseases."

In 2020, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention reported "dramatic" increases in illnesses spread by mosquitoes and other blood feeders. Zika, Chikungunya and West Nile viruses have turned up in the U.S. And Asian tiger and yellow fever types of mosquitoes that originated in the tropics are now common in Southern states and have begun afflicting Southern California.

With climate change, Michigan's mosquito season is about a month longer at the beginning and the end than a few decades ago, as warm-weather varieties increasingly turn up, entomology professor Edward Walker of Michigan State University said.

Meanwhile, the revenue from mosquito spraying has soared, according to Pest Control Technology, a trade publication. Exterminators are adding mosquitoes to their traditional services and new companies are making mosquitoes their primary focus.

Overall industry totals weren't available. But more than 70% of pest control companies surveyed last year offered the service, up from 38% in 2014. It generated nearly one-fifth of company revenue in 2021.

A Zika outbreak that began in 2015 and spread to more than 80 countries helped fuel the surge in the busi-

ness, said Daniel Markowski, technical adviser to the American Mosquito Control Association, a 1,200-member nonprofit group.

"It was all over the media," said Markowski, and "made a lot of pest control companies say, 'Holy cow, I could make a lot of money with residential services.'" Established in 2010, Mosquito Joe now has 173 franchises in 39 states, Schager said.

Many companies use a "residual barrier" strategy, spraying pesticide around the perimeter of a property that typically lasts several weeks. When mosquitoes settle on the bushes or trees, they get a lethal dose.

For yard treatments, companies typically use pyrethrins — bug-killing substances produced by chrysanthemum flowers — or synthetic imitators called pyrethroids.

The federal government says the chemicals are safe for humans when used as directed and mostly non-toxic to birds. But they're deadly to fish and bees, and harm birds indirectly by killing insects they feed on, Goldman said.

A drop-off of 3 billion North American birds in recent decades has consisted largely of insect eaters, from the whip-poor-will to

redwing blackbirds and barn swallows.

EPA says it is seeking more information about pollinator harm as part of a periodic review of pyrethrins and pyrethroids and could order labeling changes if needed.

Critics also contend homeowners are falling for company sales pitches when simpler methods, such as emptying stagnant water sources and running electric fans, would keep mosquitoes away.

The mosquito control association says companies should first clear out mosquito breeding areas and spray only when an inspection shows it's needed, instead of on a set schedule.

"If I'm doing my job, you won't need my mosquito service over time," said Dan Killingsworth, operations director for Environmental Security Pest Control, based in Panama City Beach, Florida. "If I can reduce mosquitoes on your property to where they're no longer a problem, we can potentially eliminate that service."

Many companies don't go to such lengths, Markowski said. "They'll just come out and spray your property and leave."

Schager said his company limits its insecticide use and usually sprays every three to four weeks, arguing that regular treatments are needed to disrupt breeding cycles.

Marino, the Michigan homeowner, says he's trying an optional spray of water mixed with "essential oils" from plants such as garlic, lemongrass, peppermint and rosemary, which are less harmful to other insects. About 10% of Mosquito Joe's clientele use this option, although most prefer the longer-lasting pyrethroids, Price said.

The company charges around \$90 per treatment with pyrethroids, while oils cost about 20% more, he said.

"One of our dogs likes to eat wood chips from the landscaping," Marino said. "If there's the synthetic insecticide on it, that's a great concern." □

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Russia probe memo wrongly withheld under Barr, court rules

By MEG KINNARD
Associated Press

The Justice Department under Attorney General William Barr improperly withheld portions of an internal memo Barr cited in announcing that then-President Donald Trump had not obstructed justice in the Russia investigation, a federal appeals panel said Friday.

The department had argued that the 2019 memo represented private deliberations of its lawyers before any decision was formalized, and was thus exempt from disclosure. A federal judge previously disagreed, ordering the Justice Department to provide it to a government transparency group that had sued for it.

At issue in the case is a March 24, 2019, memorandum from the head of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel

and another senior department official that was prepared for Barr to evaluate whether evidence in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation could support prosecution of the president for obstruction of justice.

Barr has said he looked to that opinion in concluding that Trump did not illegally obstruct the Russia probe, which was an investigation of whether his campaign had colluded with Russia to tip the 2016 election.

A year later, a federal judge sharply rebuked Barr's handling of Mueller's report, saying Barr had made "misleading public statements" to spin the investigation's findings in favor of Trump and had shown a "lack of candor."

Friday's appeals court decision said the internal Justice Department memo noted that "Mueller had declined to accuse President Trump



Attorney General William Barr appears before a House Appropriations subcommittee on Capitol Hill in Washington, April 9, 2019.

Associated Press

of obstructing justice but also had declined to exonerate him." The internal memo said "the Report's failure to take a definitive position could be read to imply an accusation against President Trump" if released to the public, the court wrote.

The Justice Department turned over other documents to Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington as part of the group's lawsuit, but declined to give it the memo. Government lawyers said they were entitled under public records law to with-

hold the memo because it reflected internal deliberations before any formal decision had been reached on what Mueller's evidence showed.

Sitting presidents are generally protected from criminal charges on grounds it would undermine their ability to perform the office's constitutional duties. The Justice Department, like Mueller, "took as a given that the Constitution would bar the prosecution of a sitting President," the appeals court wrote, which meant the decision that Trump wouldn't be charged had already been made and couldn't be shielded from public release. Had Justice Department officials made clear to the court that the memo related to Barr's decision on making a public statement about the report, the appellate panel wrote, rulings in the case might have been different.

Buttigieg warns airlines to help travelers or face new rules

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has warned airlines that his department could draft new rules around passenger rights if the carriers don't give more help to travelers trapped by flight cancellations and delays.

Buttigieg is asking airline CEOs to, at a minimum, provide lodging for passengers stranded overnight at an airport and give out meal vouchers for delays of three hours or longer when the disruption is caused by

something in the airline's control.

The Transportation Department on Friday released a copy of the letters, which it said were sent to CEOs of 10 U.S. airlines including the major ones, their regional affiliates, and budget carriers.

A spokeswoman for Airlines for America, a trade group whose members include American, United, Delta and Southwest, said airlines "strive to provide the highest level of customer service."

She said the airlines are

committed to overcoming challenges including a tight labor market.

Buttigieg's agency recently proposed rules around refunds for passengers whose flights are canceled or rescheduled. He told the CEOs the department is considering additional rules "that would further expand the rights of airline passengers who experience disruptions."

Buttigieg has been sparring with the airlines since late spring over high numbers of canceled and delayed flights. □



A man sleeps on the terminal floor at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport on Dec. 18, 2017, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

U.S. protections for Idaho salmon, steelhead are here to stay

By KEITH RIDLER

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A five-year review by U.S. officials has determined that Endangered Species Act protections for ocean-going salmon and steelhead that reproduce in the Snake River and its Idaho tributaries must stay in effect.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's fisheries division review made public Thursday found that steelhead, spring and summer chinook, sockeye and fall chinook that return to Idaho in rivers from the Pacific Ocean still need their federal protections.

The protections include limits on fishing, restrictions on how much water can be used for irrigation, pollution controls for industries and dam operations on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

The review said that threats from climate change increase the urgency of completing recommended fish recovery actions — including improving fish passage at hydropower dams, restoring their habitats, controlling predators and changing hatchery practices.

Of the four species that return to Idaho, sockeye



This photo provided by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game shows fisheries biologist Eli Felts looking down at Loon Creek to count chinook salmon spawning beds in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness, Idaho, on Sept. 9, 2020.

Associated Press

salmon are considered the most imperiled and were classified as endangered in 1991. The fish reproduces in high mountain lakes in central Idaho and they teetered on extinction for much of the 1990s.

An elaborate hatchery program operated by the Idaho Department of Fish and game that tracks the genetic history of individual

fish is aimed at restoring the species.

But the population of the sockeye salmon has not improved much since it was listed as endangered, the review said. The species remains "at high risk of extinction" amid challenges from climate change, a lack of food in oceans blamed on water warming and because of sea lion predation.

Snake River spring and summer chinook, classified as threatened in 1992, include fish populations in part of the Snake River and in Washington state in the Tucannon, Grande Ronde and Imnaha rivers. The fish are also deemed threatened in parts of Idaho's Salmon River.

Historically, the fish

spawned in Idaho areas that they can no longer reach, including above the Hells Canyon Dam and parts of the Clearwater River basin, the federal review said.

"Overall, the information analyzed for this 5-year review indicates an increased level of concern in the risk status" for the fish, researchers wrote.

The researchers cited declining population trends and that no fish populations are reaching a minimum threshold set by the Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team. The team works to interpret information related to fish recovery.

Fall chinook were classified as threatened in 1992 and include fish in the mainstem Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam, the Salmon River and Clearwater River basins and in the Tucannon, Grande Ronde and Imnaha rivers in Washington state. Those fish could be recovered by reintroducing them above the Hells Canyon Dam complex. But Idaho officials have fought that option, fearing protections for fish above the dams could limit riverside farming and ranching operations. □

Large fire consumes boats, buildings, vehicles at boatyard



Crews battle a massive fire that has destroyed buildings, cars and vessels at a boat yard in Mattapoisett, Mass., Friday, Aug. 19, 2022.

Associated Press

MATTAPOISETT, Mass. (AP) — A huge fire at a Massachusetts marina left several boats and vehicles burned-out shells Friday and produced a plume of black smoke so thick it was

picked up by weather radar.

Aerial video taken by WCVB-TV showed much of the boatyard in Mattapoisett engulfed in flames Friday afternoon, destroying

a number of boats, vehicles and buildings. Firefighters from around the region, including from as far away as Providence, Rhode Island about 30 miles away, responded to the blaze. People who picked up the phones at the Mattapoisett fire and police departments said no one was available to comment. It was unclear if anyone was hurt. The cause of blaze is currently under investigation. The area of the fire was part of a National Weather Service warning Friday of elevated fire risk due to drought and high winds. It sent a plume of dense black smoke over southeastern Massachusetts that could be seen for miles.

The Weather Service said on Twitter that its radar had

detected "what is most likely a smoke plume" in Mattapoisett.

Mattapoisett resident Richard Walker, 72, was heading out on a motorcycle ride when he spotted the thick black smoke.

He drove down to the town beach and shot a brief video. He said he could see it even five miles away as he continued on his ride.

"There were flames and billowing black smoke. So much of it," Walker said. "Thankfully, it looks like a lot of people had their boats out in the harbor. There didn't seem to be too many in the yard."

Pamela Fleming saw the fire from the back deck of her summer home in Mattapoisett. She said the fire knocked out power to the

area and forced the closure of a road to a popular beach and lighthouse just beyond the marina.

"The popping sounds of all the fuel and other combustibles exploding was very eerie," Fleming said. "The smoke was aggressively billowing from the area. As soon as it rose, there was more black heavy rolling smoke to take its place."

Several other people posted images and video of the fire and smoke on social media.

The Mattapoisett Boatyard's website says it's been a family-owned marina since 1962, catering primarily to recreational boaters, and has the capacity to store up to 150 vessels during the summer that aren't in use or are for sale. □

Bomb threats put tiny Moldova, Ukraine's neighbor, on edge

By **CRISTIAN JARDAN** and
STEPHEN McGRATH

CHISINAU, Moldova (AP)

— For tiny Moldova, an impoverished, landlocked nation that borders war-torn Ukraine but isn't in the European Union or NATO, it's been another week plagued by bomb threats. On an overcast day outside the international airport serving Moldova's capital of Chisinau, hundreds of people lined up this week as bomb-sniffing dogs examined the vicinity. That's now a common scene in Europe's poorest nation as it battles what observers believe are attempts to destabilize the former Soviet republic amid Russia's war in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of July, Moldova has received nearly 60 bomb threats with more than 15 reported so far this week at locations ranging from the capital's city hall, to the airport, the supreme court, shopping malls and hospitals.

While no one has yet been charged for the bomb threats, most of which have arrived via email and all of which have turned out to be false, officials say they have traced computer addresses to Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

"It is part of the disinformation war against Moldova, which is ongoing," said Valeriu Pasa, an analyst at the Chisinau think tank Watchdog.md. "It could be part of the Russian effort to destabilize Moldova, as they use many different methods to do so."

Since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, Moldova, which has a population of 2.6 million people, has faced a multitude of crises. It has received more Ukrainian refugees per capita than any other country; tensions have soared in the country's Russia-backed break-away region; it is dealing with an acute energy crisis; and like much of Europe it is battling skyrocketing inflation.

The frequent bomb threats are only adding pressure to the country's already overstretched authorities.



A member of the security personnel checks a vehicle for explosive devices at the international airport in Chisinau, Moldova, Tuesday, Aug. 16, 2022.

Associated Press

"It blocks a lot of the resources police, investigators, technical services it's a type of bullying I would say, or harassment, of Moldovan state systems and public services," Pasa said. Maxim Motinga, a prosecutor from Moldova's Office for Combating Organized Crime, told The Associated Press that since the bomb threats started "practically every day we open criminal cases."

"At the moment, all criminal investigations are ongoing," he said, adding that requests have been made for official assistance from Russia and Ukraine if "certain tracks leading to the respective countries were established."

"I hope we get some answers from those countries," he said.

For Veaceslav Belbas, a 43-year-old Moldovan businessman returning from Turkey to Chisinau on Monday, a bomb threat left him frightened as his plane circled the capital's airport for 30 minutes. After that, the plane did a U-turn and went back to Turkey.

"We prayed a lot and finally landed," he said. "For me, it was such a big shock that I told my wife that this is my last flight."

Tensions in Moldova soared

in April after a series of actual explosions occurred in the Russia-backed break-away region of Transnistria, where Russia bases about 1,500 troops in a so-called frozen conflict zone. It raised fears that non-NATO, militarily neutral Moldova could get dragged into Russia's war orbit. At least one Russian official has spoken openly of snatching enough land in southern Ukraine to link up Russian-controlled areas from the mainland to Transnistria.

Observers pointed out that the blasts came as Moldova — which has historically close ties with Moscow — showed a growing Western orientation and after it had applied to join the EU, which it did shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine. It was granted EU candidate status in late June, shortly before the bomb threats started.

Since Moldova gained independence in 1991, it has been plagued by organized crime and official corruption. After an election in 2019, a local oligarch attempted to seize power, which triggered mass protests before he fled the country. In 2014, several politicians and oligarchs had alleged ties to a scam in which \$1 billion vanished

from local banks. No one has yet been convicted in that case.

Galina Gheorghes was returning to England from Moldova last month after attending a family get-together when a bomb threat canceled her flight.

She says she is angry that no one has yet been caught.

"It is very bad what's happening ... unfortunately, the ordinary people suffer," the 35-year-old Gheorghes said.

Amid a seemingly endless pattern of disruptive and costly threats, Moldova's Internal Ministry said it wants to toughen punishments for anyone convicted of false bomb alerts by ramping up fines and handing out lengthier prison sentences. Chisinau Airport has been hit by dozens of bomb threats since July and has bolstered security in response. Radu Zanoaga, head of border police at the airport, says a specialist unit has been established to save security officials the trouble of traveling in from the city center each time a bomb threat is made.

"At the moment, we are dealing with the situation in cooperation with other (state) bodies and institutions that operate within the airport," he said.

"There have been bomb alerts before — but not as many and not as frequent as now." □

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Mexico sees army role in 2014 case of missing 43 students

By **MARÍA VERZA**
 Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Truth Commission established to clear up the 2014 disappearances of 43 students in southern Mexico said Thursday the army was responsible at least for not stopping the abductions because a soldier had infiltrated the student group and the army knew what was happening. On Sept. 26, 2014, local police from the town of Iguala, members of organized crime and authorities abducted 43 students from buses. The students were from a rural teachers' college called Ayotzinapa elsewhere in Guerrero state and they periodically commandeered buses for their transportation. The administration of then-President Enrique Peña Nieto presented as the "historic truth" that the students were turned over to a drug gang who killed them, incinerated their bodies at a dump in nearby Cocula and tossed the burnt remains into a river. Investigations by independent experts and the Attorney General's Office, and



A woman carries a banner that reads in Spanish "We are missing 43," referring to the 43 missing students from a rural teachers college during a march in Mexico City, Thursday, Nov. 26, 2015. Associated Press

corroborated by the Truth Commission, have since dismissed the incineration at the Cocula dump, although recovered burnt bone fragments have been used to identify three of the missing students. Interior Undersecretary Alejandro Encinas, who leads the commission, said Thursday it was a "state crime," in which officials from all levels of government were

involved. He said the army is responsible, "for action, omission or negligence." One of the abducted students was a soldier who had infiltrated the school and yet the army did not search for him even though it had real-time information about what was happening, he said. Encinas said the inaction violated army protocols for cases of missing soldiers.

The defense ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Encinas also said the highest official implicated in the case, Tomás Zerón, had been offered a deal in exchange for his cooperation. Zerón is accused of torture and forced disappearance and is considered a fugitive while he resides in Israel. Zerón, who oversaw the criminal in-

vestigation agency of the Attorney General's Office and also its forensic work in the case, is considered the author of the Peña Nieto administration's version of events. Eight years in, there has been no evidence that the students could still be alive. Encinas also revived the hypothesis that the origin of the abductions was tied to the region's active drug trafficking. He said a bus that night had passed through 16 federal security checkpoints without being stopped, despite intercepted communications discussing "merchandise" that it was carrying. "And the merchandise is either drugs or money," he said. A 2016 investigation by independent experts found that federal police had taken students off the so-called "fifth bus" and then escorted it out of Iguala. Investigators suspected the bus was part of a heroin trafficking route from the mountains of Guerrero to Chicago and that the students had unknowingly hijacked it and its illicit cargo triggering the episode.

Cambodia says it's helping foreigners scammed by traffickers

By **SOPHENG CHEANG**
 Associated Press

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Cambodia on Friday said it is attempting to aid foreigners who have been victimized by human traffickers, after Taiwan said

it is seeking to free more than 300 of its citizens who were lured to the Southeast Asian nation by organized crime groups. The mostly well-educated young people were promised high wages for tech

jobs, but then were forced to work in call centers, scamming mainly mainland Chinese into making payments for non-existent government fees or investment opportunities. Interior Minister Sar Kheng said his ministry is launching a nationwide check of all foreigners living in Cambodia, aside from embassy personnel. He said it will search especially for foreigners who have been victimized by human traffickers. He said police in two provinces, Kandal and Preah Sihanoukville, on Thursday checked the status of foreigners residing or working at hotels, rented properties and casinos. Sar Kheng said several people were arrested on suspicion of organizing human trafficking and some apparent victims were

taken into protection. Police were still trying to determine whether those who said they were victims were telling the truth, he said. Sar Kheng did not specify how many people were rounded up or what their nationalities were, but confirmed that some foreigners told police that they had been attracted by what was portrayed as lawful jobs offering high salaries. Upon arriving in Cambodia, however, they were forced to work illegally in jobs that were "not what they had agreed to," Sar Kheng said. Separately, Deputy National Police chief Gen. Chhay Sinarith said in recent years Cambodian authorities have uncovered numerous illegal online schemes that lured illegal workers, and have arrested hundreds of people from China and Taiwan for involvement.

Scammers, mainly from China, have used Cambodia as a base for extorting money, Chhay Sinarith said. Taiwan's government on Friday said 333 of its citizens were stuck in Cambodia after being lured by crime groups promising high wages for tech jobs, based on reports from families asking for help. The situation is complicated further because Cambodia is a close ally of China and refuses to recognize Taiwan or have any official contacts with the government in Taipei. Taiwanese media have been reporting extensively on the plight of those trapped by the networks. Police at Taiwan's main Taoyuan International Airport have been patrolling with signs warning of the dangers of bogus offers of high salaries in Southeast Asia.



In this photo released by the Taiwan Criminal Investigation Bureau, police officers from the Taiwan Criminal Investigation Bureau escort two suspect who were deported from Bangkok and believed to be involved in scam cases in Cambodia as they arrive back at the Taoyuan International Airport in Taiwan on Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022.

Associated Press

Minister of Economic Affairs announces national program for financial education

ORANJESTAD – Minister of Economic Affairs, Communication and Sustainable Development, Geoffrey Wever announced during a press conference on Thursday the introduction of a program of financial education, “Finanzas den mi Hogar”.

Wever highlighted that financial education is a very important topic for every citizen's wallet. In Aruba, financial education as a concept is still not part of the education system, and as a consequence, many people confront financial hardship. As minister of Economic Affairs, he believes it is important for consumers to be well prepared, for them to know their rights and to have financial knowledge.

“As minister of Economic Affairs, on the one hand you stimulate and you want a strong economy, but you also want to have a consumer who is aware of his rights, a consumer who is well protected and knows his position in the market”, Wever said.

In this context, the Government of Aruba finds it very important to stimulate the ability and financial knowledge of every citizen, particularly in his role as minister of Economic Affairs he believes that the economic formation and wellbeing of each citizen is important, and the government wants to contribute to that.

Wever commented that the current situation is not easy in Aruba or in the world. Price of gasoline, water and electricity has gone up as well as inflation, and in this context, the citizen keeps seeing his purchasing power reduced, he sees he was less money to spend. And in this context, Wever believes it is important for the citizen to become more aware of the way in which he spends his money, how he enters financial commitments which will have a long-term impact.



“In this context, we decided to come up with a financial education program in order to give the citizens who are interested in participating in it the possibility to receive a type of training that perhaps before they didn't have access to. The government thinks it is important to facilitate this”, he said.

The minister of Economic Affairs also presented some numbers illustrating why a financial education program for the citizens is relevant and necessary. He referred to a report based on a survey executed by Central Bank of Aruba, called “The Financial Wellbeing of Households”, which indicates that 36% of households have financial worries. Tree of each household spends more money than they make, and half of these households are financially fragile and have too much debt.

25% of citizens, one in four households, don't have a pension arrangement. Less than 2% of households is considered financially fit, while 16% are financially stable, 34% are financially dependent, and 20% are financially disturbed.

With this information, minister Wever emphasizes that he wants to illustrate that there are families going through difficult situations and are not well equipped financially. “With this information we reached the conclusion that as a government we have the duty to do this for our citizens, and for this reason we came up with the program of financial education ‘Finanzas den mi Hogar’”, he added.

The program will be available in six districts: San Nicolas, Savaneta, Santa Cruz, Paradera, Oranjestad and Noord and will give the possibility to 50 participants in each district to take part

in the training. Participation is free and will deal with four topics of finances.

The first topic is “I am effective in my household”, which is focused on how the citizen spends the money that he has at home in his own household. The second topic reflects the subject of “debt payment”. Wever highlights that a lot of citizens have debt in various financial institutions and many times they have so much debt that they cannot pay their dues. The goal of this part of the course is to teach the citizen that when they are in such a situation, they need to approach institutions, reach payment agreements, and avoid that the problem accumulates.

The third topic is “I invest in my future”. Wever indicated that a lot of citizens don't think about tomorrow and spend everything today. This is an element to teach the citizen to think

about tomorrow, to invest in his children's' education. And the last topic is “basic budget”, which will be based on the topic of how to create a monthly budget for the household and how the citizen spends his income.

The program “Finanzas den mi Hogar” will take about a year to be completely executed. Each neighborhood will receive these four topics and there will be different nights during one year where they will receive education on this field.

With this program, the government of Aruba wants to demonstrate that the financial wellbeing of the citizens is important and that they believe in investing in the people. “This is a very small step, it's not a solution for the financial problems, but it's part of a greater context”, Wever said.



PALM BEACH —A true once-in-a-lifetime experience. The secret garden is located in a traditional Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The Chef's Garden is a 6-course surprise menu with authentic classic French dishes by Dutch top chef Patrick van der Donk. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm to 10pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Patrick van der Donk - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about guest chef Patrick

Chef Patrick van der Donk is a true legend on Aruba. Chef Patrick attended culinary school in the Netherlands where he worked with several of the best Dutch chefs, including two 3-star Michelin chefs who taught him all the tricks of the trade. He was also inspired by self-taught Michelin star chef Raymond Blanc OBE who has educated the most prominent British chefs of today.

Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, culinary magic by European top chef in a romantic garden



The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Vegan options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinary delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know how



to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal. □

For reservations:

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Email: info@papillonaruba.com
Facebook Papillon Aruba

Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

ST. CRUZ — The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the

beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The

Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The afore mentioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □

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The Ostrich Farm

Matividiri – One of the most entertaining vacation activities is a visit to the Ostrich Farm, a popular stopover on most island jeep tours.

Locals and visitors enjoy the guided ostrich tour at the farm and features a well-stocked locally crafted and produced Art Boutique. The highlight of the visit is always the fun interaction with the resident ostriches and emus, including a trip to the incubators and the bird kindergarten, housing baby ostriches,



baby emus, chicken and ducks, and even a land turtle!

It was a National Geographic moment when on cue Mr. Ostrich flapped his wings excitedly and poked around the ground with his bill, triggering Mrs. Ostrich who ran around in circles, flapped her wings and also poked around, before collapsing on the ground in a heap of feathers, allowing him to mount her, shaking, winding and spiraling his head in all direction!

Mr. Ostrich concluded his unexpected performance with a loud honking, his eyes rolling, then got up in a huff to nonchalantly strut away, leaving his wife and the scrutiny of our cameras.

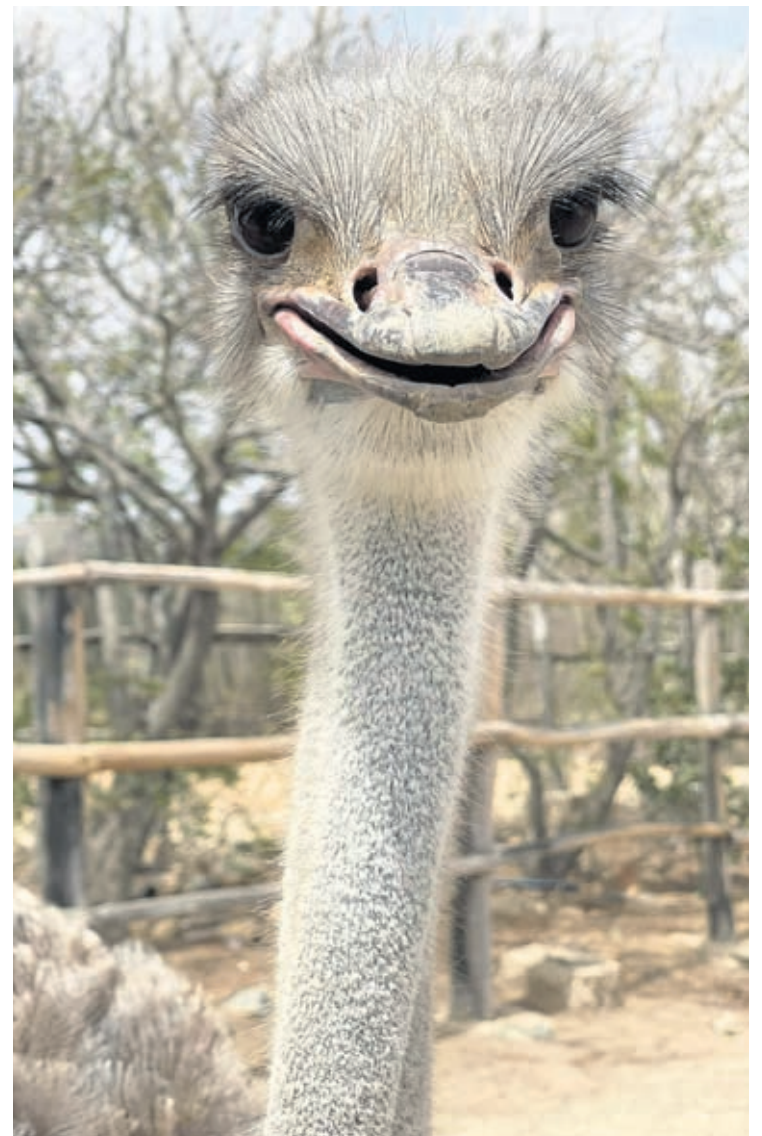
It was a surprise reality TV moment, and not usually included in the regular program. Feeding the Ostriches is however always on the program, and they are eternally hungry, and fun!

Tours are available daily every half hour from 10– 3pm. No reservations needed for small groups. □

Matividiri 57, Open daily from 10:00 AM till 4:00 PM

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For more information go to the website: www.arubaostrichfarm.com



Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are

many fascinating underwater spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky

beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of



the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles.

Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience. □

Attractions and Sightseeing locations in Aruba

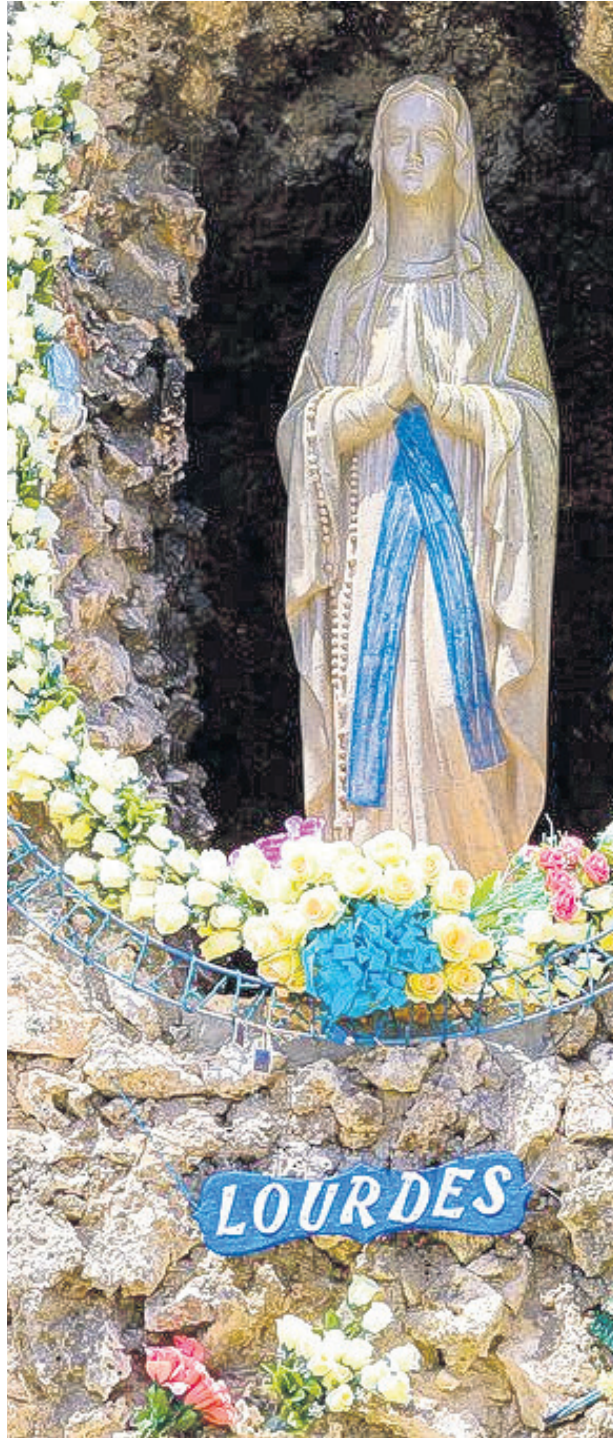


ORANJESTAD — There are enough sightseeing locations on the island to fill up a month-long vacation. Aruba's beaches are a big attraction, and although it's great to spend long days just relaxing on the beach and listening to the ocean, there are also plenty of opportunities to get to know Aruba's most attractive sights, historical and natural attractions, and museums. Check out these attractions you don't want to miss!

Blue Horses in Downtown, Oranjestad

This series of 8 sculptures were created by native Aruban artist Osaira Muyale. She named the project Paarden Baai, which translates to "Horse Bay". The statues were installed in 2015 and pay homage to the rich history of Aruba's horse trading industry. In the 17th Century Aruba was used by many countries (Europe, South America, Caribbean islands, and the Mediterranean) as a trading post. The most popular being cattle and horse trading. Horses were once the most important sources of livelihood for Aruba.

For 4 centuries the horse and cattle trade ran strong. At any given time Aruba was home to herds of thousands of horses that roamed the island. Aruba being the perfect trading post en-



couraged an extremely diverse culture and is the reason almost all Arubans speak more than 1 or 2 languages.

Each of the 8 bright royal blue horses is unique and carries its own name and personality. Pictured above is the mare Sinforosa, but you can also find Saturnina, Escapia, Rosalina, Eufrosina, Ambrosio, Bonifacia, and Celestina. The sculptures embody strength, nobility, grace, beauty and freedom. They represent the historical moment where the horses jumped from the ship decks into the Caribbean and swam to the Aruban Bay.

When you visit Aruba be sure to explore downtown Oranjestad and try to find all 8!

The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas.

A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos, was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession leaves from the St. Theresita church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed. The grotto is located road-side and



can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location.

Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Watch more than 80 species of migratory birds from the Bubali watch tower, overlooking their resting and breeding area. The observation tower allows birdwatchers to get a true birds' eye view. Migratory birds, looking for lush vegetation in which to nest, find an oasis within the Bubali Bird Sanctuary. The nearby water treatment facility empties into two inter-connected man-made bird ponds. Birds that inhabit the sanctuary include herons, egrets, gulls, skimmers, coots, ducks and more. Located within walking distance of the Palm Beach resorts, the Bubali Bird Sanctuary offers some unique bird watching opportunities. You can't miss it as it is located just in front of the historical Old Dutch Windmill. Make sure to bring your camera as many of these birds will randomly fly by the observation tower giving a little show. This is a great place to bring kids for a unique and possibly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be so close to the untamed.

The happiest island in the Caribbean is so much more than just sun, sand and sea. ☐

Fabio Alexander, An 11-year-old with a big dream of playing professional soccer

Soccer is one of the most popular sports around the world and also in Aruba. A lot of young people share the dream of playing professionally for big teams. Recently in Aruba a soccer clinic was held by Real Madrid Foundation, during which a group of young sportspeople got the opportunity to receive different techniques according to the philosophy of discipline and the play style of the soccer team Real Madrid.

One of the participants at the clinic, Fabio Alexander Montilla, an 11-year-old soccer player with the dream of becoming a professional player, told our reporter about his experience during the clinic, what he learned and what his dream is.

When he was only two years old, he received his first soccer ball, and by the time he was three he was already part of a soccer team in Aruba.

He said that his experience during the clinic of the Real Madrid Foundation was very good and he learned a lot of new things. "It went really well, I had a lot of fun and I think if possible I would like to go again next year", he said. "I knew a couple of things, but I learned more which makes things easier, and I feel like we played just like the first

team of Real Madrid."

Alexander said also that his favorite aspect of the clinic was that the coaches were very kind. He said he had a great time and he learned new techniques which will help him improve his skills to play soccer.

Alexander plays with a well-known local team, and his position is defense although he can also play midfield, defensive midfield. He doesn't hesitate to defend his team's goal until the end.

Despite his newfound love of Real Madrid, his favorite team is Barcelona and his favorite player is Lionel Messi. Our reporter asked what he would do if in the future he gets an offer to play for Real Madrid, but his favorite team is Barcelona. Alexander laughed and answered: "I would play for Real Madrid. I like them a lot as well; it's just that since I was very young my father would show me Barcelona before Real Madrid. Becoming a professional player is my dream and I am working very hard to reach it."

Claudia Meriño, Alexander's mother, explained to our reporter that Alexander received an invitation this year to take part in the clinic, because last year he also participated but they

had to pay for his spot. "This year, a man contacted me asking if I was interested in a free spot for the clinic of the Real Madrid Foundation this year. I said yes, that my son was very interested."

During the clinic there were different categories, each with around 12 children participating. By the end of the clinic, of all the children who participated, one who stood out was selected to travel to Madrid for free and to take part in a championship in Madrid. Aside from that, another ten kids will also receive an invitation to go to Madrid.

"We are waiting for the end of the month to see if he gets an invitation. On the last day of training they do the closing of the clinic, they hand out the prizes, certificates, the balls. They select one child in each category who is going to Madrid for free, and for those who get an invitation, they send an e-mail after one or two weeks. They send the list of invitees, which is around ten children", Meriño explained.

For his part, Alexander says that he is waiting anxiously and hopes that he can be one of the invitees to go play soccer in Madrid, another dream which could come true. "If they invite me to go to Spain, I will go", he said. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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- 38 Furious
- 39 City on the Mohawk

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Yesterday's answer

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8-20

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-20

CRYPTOQUOTE

K P B C Z E I I E C Q I C X I

F K D G C Z D V E Q K A I D C M V B .

N K L I I Q B C Z H E . — M C A A B

R V H D C X

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: AND THOUGH SHE BE BUT LITTLE, SHE IS FIERCE. — SHAKESPEARE

Unions push airlines to promise they'll avoid stock buybacks



People walk through John F. Kennedy International Airport on June 28, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — Labor unions are pressuring U.S. airlines not to buy back their own stock but instead spend the money on hiring more workers and fixing problems that caused widespread flight delays and cancellations this summer.

The unions said Thursday that the four largest U.S. airlines spent more than \$39 billion on stock buybacks from 2014 through 2019 rather than making investments to help employees and passengers.

The airlines are currently barred from buying back their own shares as a condition of \$54 billion in federal pandemic aid, but that prohibition ends after Sept. 30. Union officials worry that buybacks will come back now that most U.S. airlines have returned to profitability after huge losses in 2020 and 2021.

The unions, which represent pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, baggage handlers and other workers, launched a campaign and petition drive that portrays buyouts as a giveaway to Wall Street and a tool for airline executives to boost their own stock-based compensation.

"We paused the greed in aviation for a little while," said Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants. She blamed "greed that ran rampant before COVID" with leaving airlines understaffed.

The unions asked airlines to pledge to forgo buybacks until airlines fix their

"operational meltdowns" and reach new labor contracts — unions are seeking substantial wage increases. A union representative said Thursday that none of the airlines immediately agreed to the pledge.

The chief financial officer of American Airlines, Derek Kerr, said in a recent interview that buybacks are not on the table. "There is no plan to do any share repurchases. All of our excess liquidity will go to pay off debt," Kerr said. A spokesman said Thursday that is still American's position.

United Airlines said that it is not currently seeking buybacks. "Our highest financial priorities right now are restoring our balance sheet and investing in our employees and customers," a spokeswoman said.

Asked about share repurchases last month, Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian did not answer directly because of the prohibition, but he said the airline has a responsibility to customers, employees, "and importantly to our owners." A Delta spokesman said Thursday that the company has raised base pay 4% and made profit-sharing payments to employees.

A Southwest Airlines spokesman said only that the airline has not announced any plans for buybacks.

Airlines could be tempted to repurchase stock because the shares might appear cheap. The Arca index of airline stocks is down 21% this year and 41% since

the start of 2020. Most U.S. airlines reported second-quarter profits, however, and revenue is surging on strong ticket sales.

Stock buybacks are a favorite target of unions and Democratic lawmakers, who often see them as widening inequality between workers and wealthier investors. The climate, health care and tax bill that President Joe Biden signed this week includes a new 1% excise tax on them beginning next year.

Corporations view buybacks as a way to reward shareholders by reducing the number of shares and making the remaining ones more valuable. Investors often prefer them over dividends, which are treated as ordinary income and taxed at up to 37%. If buybacks boost a stock's value, investors who hold the shares long enough pay a lower capital-gains tax on the profit when they sell — no more than 20%.

"There is nothing inherently wrong with a buyback. It just gives shareholders a return on their investment," said Charles Elson, founding director of a corporate-governance center at the University of Delaware.

Elson, however, said there are pitfalls. Companies might pay too much for the stock, wasting money. And executives with stock options benefit from buybacks but not from dividends, a problem that he said can be fixed by giving the executives restricted stock units instead of options.

Charles Tharp, a Boston University management professor who advises corporate boards on compensation, said that raising employee pay and buying back stock are separate decisions.

When companies approve buybacks, "it does look like I'm choosing to serve shareholders instead of employees," he said, "but that assumes you would give the raise to employees if you didn't buy back shares, which probably isn't the case." □



Cargo vessels are anchored offshore near oil platforms, before heading into the Los Angeles-Long Beach port on Oct. 5, 2021. Associated Press

Federal study: New climate law to slice carbon pollution 40%

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**

Clean energy incentives in the new spending package signed this week by President Joe Biden will trim America's emissions of heat-trapping gases by about 1.1 billion tons (1 billion metric tons) by 2030, a new Department of Energy analysis shows. The first official federal calculations, shared with The Associated Press before its release Thursday, say that between the bill just signed and last year's infrastructure spending law, the U.S. by the end of the decade will be producing about 1.26 billion tons

(1.15 billion metric tons) less carbon pollution than it would have without the laws. That saving is equivalent to about the annual greenhouse gas emissions of every home in the United States. The Energy Department analysis finds that with the new law by 2030, U.S. greenhouse gas emissions should be about 40% lower than 2005 levels, which is still not at the U.S. announced target of cutting carbon pollution between 50% and 52% by the end of the decade. But that 40% reduction is similar to earlier calculations by the independent research firm Rhodium Group, which figured cuts would be 31% to 44% and the scientists at Climate Action Tracker, which said the drop would be 26% to 42%. □

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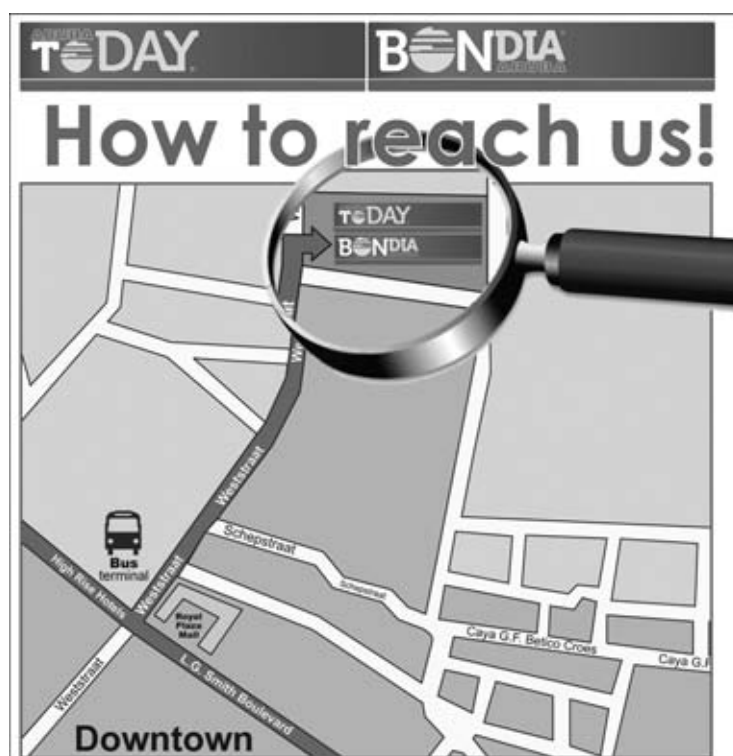
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Five things that are bugging me on a dreary day

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP Sports Columnist

When you awake to a dreary day, it puts you in a bit of a mood.

Especially when you're a journalist, which for some of us is essentially a synonym for grumpy cynic.

Considering we're still more than four months away from Festivus and the annual Air-ing of the Grievances, let's see if there's room for a new summer tradition.

Five Things That Are Bugging Me.

Here we go (in no particular order of irritation):

— Deshaun Watson will return to the football field this season, albeit after sitting out an 11-game suspension, paying a \$5 million fine and getting some long-overdue treatment for his shocking behavior.

The Cleveland Browns quarterback got off easy after being accused of sexually harassing and coercing two dozen women during massage therapy sessions while he was with the Houston Texans. A former federal judge who heard the case called Watson's behavior "more egregious than any before reviewed by the NFL," which is really saying something when one considers the league's epic roll call of misbehavior down through the years. Nevertheless, Watson got



Iowa running back Tyler Goodson (15) runs from Michigan defensive back Vincent Gray, center, and defensive back DJ Turner (5) during the second half of the Big Ten championship NCAA college football game, Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

what he wanted most of all — a chance to get back on the field sometime this season. He should use the down time to make himself a better person, but we're not holding our breath on that one.

— In what sounded like perverse bid to show how hard everyone is working to save his job, Nebraska football coach Scott Frost proudly boasted of his offensive linemen puking 15 to 20 times a day at practice. Frost gave the credit — blame might be more ap-

propriate — to their position coach, Donovan Raiola.

"It's not because they're not in shape — he's just working them hard," Frost said, according to the Omaha World-Herald. "I think they love it. He's kind of freed them up to go be aggressive and I love the way they're coming off the ball." Now, I'm no doctor, but turning your program into the Junction Boys is disturbing at the very least, if not outright abusive.

Frost is clearly in desperation mode after going 15-29

over his first four seasons at the helm of a once-proud program that is now just a laughingstock.

And, now, maybe even a dangerous place to play. — The debate over transgender athletes has taken a totally expected turn with news out of Utah that a girl was secretly investigated — without her or her parents being told — after high school officials received complaints from the parents of two girls she beat in a competition.

This wasn't the first time,

either. The Salt Lake Tribune reports the Utah High School Activities Association has looked into other complaints involving supposedly transgender athletes, with a spokesman saying some involved a girl who "doesn't look feminine enough." None of the complaints have been verified, of course, but overbearing parents now have a convenient excuse anytime their kid loses.

The issue of transgender athletes is a complicated one, and we've said before that any measures should be based on nuance, compassion and science. Instead, we've had a bunch of states, including Utah, hastily approve bans that are nothing more than an attempt to score political points. Gov. Spencer Cox, a Republican whose veto of the Utah ban was overridden by the Legislature, put it best: "My goodness, we're living in this world where we've become sore losers, and we're looking for any reason why our kid lost."

— Here's your weekly update from the home of the regime that is funding the breakaway LIV golf tour.

A court in Saudi Arabia has sentenced a doctoral student, who is also the mother of two, to 34 years in prison for spreading "rumors" and retweeting dissidents. □

Roglic's Jumbo-Visma team wins 1st stage of Spanish Vuelta



Jumbo-Visma team riders with new overall leader Robert Gesink of The Netherlands, left, cross the finish line during the first stage of the Vuelta cycling race, a team time trial over 23.3 kilometers (14.5 miles) with start and finish in, Utrecht, Netherlands, Friday, Aug. 19, 2022.

UTRECHT, Netherlands (AP) — Primož Roglic got off to

a good start in his quest to win an unprecedented

fourth straight Spanish Vuelta title when his Jumbo-Visma team won the opening team time trial in the Netherlands on Friday.

Jumbo-Visma, competing on home soil as the Netherlands finally got to open the Vuelta after not being able to do it in previous years because of the coronavirus pandemic, finished 13 seconds ahead of team Ineos Grenadiers and 14 seconds in front of Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl.

Roglic's teammate Robert Gesink, who is Dutch, will get to wear the leader's red jersey in his ninth appearance in the Grand Tour race.

"He's the one that deserves it the most, it's a pleasure racing for so many years with him," Roglic said. "I started with him in the team, he taught me a lot and it's nice to win as the home team with a home rider." It had been doubtful whether Roglic would be able to defend his Vuelta title after he was injured at the Tour de France, which affected his preparations. "My condition is good enough to win today," Roglic said. "I'm super happy about it. It was a pleasure today, the guys did a really great job. Twenty days more to come."

The Spanish Vuelta re-

mains the only Grand Tour event won by Roglic, who has finished second at the Tour de France and third at the Giro d'Italia. He will be trying to join Spaniard Roberto Heras (2000, 2003-05) as the only rider to win four Vuelta titles. Tony Rominger and Alberto Contador are the only other riders with three Vuelta titles.

The second and third stages will also take place in the Netherlands. The three-week race will feature eight flat stages — two of them with high-altitude finishes — as well as four hilly stages, seven mountain stages and two time trials. Riders will get three rest days. □

Small but mighty, Curacao poised for Little League run

By MATTHEW GELHARD

Associated Press

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa.

(AP) — If there's a player who best represents just how good Curacao can be at the Little League World Series, it may be Davey-Jay Rijke.

In Curacao's 2-0 victory Wednesday over a talented team from Nicaragua, Davey-Jay allowed just two hits while striking out 14 over 5 1/3 innings. He came up with a big hit, a triple in the sixth inning, and scored his team's insurance run.

Not only that, but with Curacao up just 1-0 and Nicaragua with runners in scoring position in the fourth inning, Davey-Jay laid out to grab a bunt that popped up between the mound and the first base line. As he went back to the dugout, his teammates mobbed him, with one tossing a jacket over his shoulders.

"You have to keep the guys smiling, just let them have fun," Zaino Everett, the team's manager, said afterward. "There are so many pressures in the game to not be that way."

Davey-Jay works fast but also stays calm. The batters he faces don't seem to stay so cool facing his 75 mph fastball, which comes in about as fast as a 98 mph pitch from a major league mound. Also unnerving to



Curacao's Davey-Jay Rijke (8) delivers a pitch against Nicaragua during the fourth inning of a baseball game at the Little League World Series tournament in South Williamsport, Pa., Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2022.

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hitters is his tempo. As soon as his foot touches the rubber, Davey-Jay's windup begins.

"I feel good, my arm feels good, my control is perfect," Davey-Jay said through an interpreter. "That's the way Shohei Ohtani is looking so I'm trying to be like him."

What's interesting about Curacao is performances like Davey-Jay's, while remarkable, aren't so rare.

Curacao is located just off the coast of Venezuela and is small in physical size — a third as big as New

York City — with a population at just over 150,000 that is comparable to Springfield, Massachusetts.

This year is the country's 14th visit to South Williamsport, including a 2004 championship with a team that featured future notable big leaguers such as Jonathan Schoop and Jurickson Profar in a win over undefeated California. It also finished as runner-up in 2005 and in 2019, the last time international teams played in the tournament. An advantage that the is-

land of Curacao has is the condition of its fields — and that means the relatively poor condition. Baseball diamonds lack the smooth playing surface that grass provides for infields, and instead are left with divots and rocks, forcing infielders to handle frequent bad hops from ground balls.

"That's why our infielders have the smoothest hands," said Andy Martina, a broadcaster covering the LLWS for fans back in Curacao on *Deporte Activo*. "Look at Didi (Gregori-

ous) and Ozzie (Albies)."

The island boasts Hall of Famer Andruw Jones, along with current major leaguers such as Albies, Gregorious, Kenley Jansen, Profar and more.

"Most of the MLB players give back to the community," Martina said. "They will talk to the little leaguers and explain how they play the game."

The team also carries a little bit of the swagger of their mentors and predecessors. They can be seen on the field in pregame dancing in groups, or in the case of Kyshore Hinkle, running his fingers across the front of the jersey where "Caribbean" is printed to show where he came from after a big play.

Curacao fell 9-3 on Friday to another tough team, Panama, which was sparked by a first-inning grand slam from Gabriel De Gracia. Nonetheless, the Caribbean team pulled to 5-3 in the fourth inning, with the leading run at the plate, before its rally faltered. Curacao is still alive in the double-elimination tournament.

"We've trained so long and hard to get here, for this year since the pandemic stopped us from coming the past two years," Everett said. "We come back, do a good job, and make Curacao proud of us." □

Usyk maintains weight for rematch against Joshua

KING ABDULLAH SPORTS CITY, Saudi Arabia (AP) —

World heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk has maintained a similar weight for his rematch with Anthony Joshua.

The Ukrainian boxer, who is defending his WBA, IBF and WBO belts against Joshua in Saudi Arabia on Saturday, tipped the scales at 100.5 kilograms (221.5 pounds) at the weigh-in on Friday.

Usyk weighed in at 100 kilograms (221 pounds) for the first fight in London in September, which he won by a unanimous decision.

Joshua came in at 110.9 kilograms (244.5 pounds),

which is slightly heavier than the first fight.

The two fighters shared an intense stare-down after the weigh-in at King Abdullah Sports City, ignoring repeated requests to break away.

"All this stuff doesn't matter, it's just about the fight," said Joshua, who is looking to regain the belts and become a three-time world champion. "Weight, face-offs — none of it matters to me. I'm just looking forward to the fight."

Asked what he expects to happen in the 10,000-capacity King Abdullah Sports City Arena on Saturday, Joshua said: "I'm ready for

12 rounds. Anything shorter than that is a bonus."

A more aggressive approach is expected from Joshua after being dominated by the smaller Usyk last year.

Still, the British boxer — known earlier in his career as a knockout specialist — is adamant he is not a "one-trick pony."

"You have got to have different aspects to your game," Joshua said. "Use your strengths, but don't neglect the other areas."

"I need to get my feet out of the mud, use my feet, get my heart rate going, use my attributes. I'm definitely the bigger man. I can



Heavyweight boxers Britain's Anthony Joshua, center right, and Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk, center left, face off during a weigh-in at King Abdullah Sports City in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Friday, Aug. 19, 2022. Joshua is due to fight defending champion Usyk in a heavyweight boxing rematch in Jeddah on Aug. 20.

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keep it rangy or I can keep it short. □

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